2: Schaden--101 E-4,5 (1946-1954) 1962 SM4 Guarani SM4

Chapter VI

States of Crisis in Guaraní Life

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The social rhythm of Guaraní life stems not only from the annual "ecological cycle," but also from the regular sequence or more or less fortuitous appearance of crisis situations, which sometimes concern the group in its totality, sometimes more precisely certain persons because of the position that falls to them in the social structure. The crisis situations, because of the danger involved in them for certain elements of the community or for the whole group, demand special treatment, according to norms and rites established by tradition. In the existence of the individual birth, biological maturation, illnesses, the birth of children, and death are the principal times of crisis. For the group as a whole, special situations, such as the harvest of the first green maize, epidemics, journeys, and other events in some way disrupt the equilibrium of daily life and demand or may demand ritual measures.

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Not all crisis situations require identical precautions. The most important ones are those in which the person involved is given the special designation of (h)akú or odjékóaku, being subject to the danger of sexual enchantment, which is called odjépotá; the Mbüá also speak of karuguá. The conjunction of measures that the person should take is called "resguardo" /caution, defense preventive measures/ in Portuguese: in Guaraní one simply says that So-and-So is akú. Akú is the state of the father (and among the Mbüá that of the mother as well) during the first days after the birth of the child, the girl during her first menstruation is akú, and, finally (among the Kayová), the boy during the days that follow the lip piercing. -- We also find the term resguardo /this word is not italicized in the original source/ in texts about the ancient Tupinambá, where it is said in "resguardo do matador" /the caution of the murderer/.

2: Schaden--164 E-4, 5 (1948-1954) 1962 Sh44 Guarani Sh44

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753 754 171 Among the South American Indians the most common opinion about the origin of sickness is the one that bad individuals, particularly sorcerers from a foreign tribe or even from among their own people, abuse their faculties and extraordinary powers in order to make an object or substance responsible for the illness, the quid malignum, enter the body of another. This 753 754 theory is also accepted by the Guaraní, among whom, however, it is not exclusive, but exists side by side with other etiologies proceeding directly from the religious doctrines.

In any case, among the Guaraní too the belief that sicknesses, at least the majority of them, are explained by the bad intentions of knowledgeable persons and bearers of magic resources predominates. Thus the appearance of an epidemic or 753 even of a series of cases of sickness in the same village and in 571 a short space of time can cause important social consequences, 578 generate distrust, misunderstanding, or even open enmities and fights within the local group, putting into action disruptive forces of social life existing in a latent state. It is even possible to state that the mystical sense of solidarity, which, although it does not unite the whole tribe and not always the individuals of a certain horde, makes the populations of the different villages cohesive, rarely suffers dissolution of continuity, except for the atmosphere of insecurity and discontent that dominates all in situations of this nature. /128/ This is a supposition made, of [182] course, concerning villages that do not already find themselves [177] in a state of open social disorganization through continuous contact with civilization. After the epidemic is past, there is no delay in re-establishing the normal equilibrium, and the authority of the doctor-sorcerer, who has used the magic and religious resources, or that of the capitão, who has made use of his police authority in order to normalize the situation by fighting the opposing forces, then is subject to considerable increment.

754 157 One of the disruptive forces most characteristic of Guaraní society is the constant suspicion of practices of black magic within the group. There is not much exaggeration in the statement that

2t Schaden--192 E-4,5 (1946-1954) 1962 SM4 Guarani SM4

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A guest of the Kayová, Pascoal very naturally uses the names of their gods in place of those of the deities of his group. On the other hand, he is already too old to replace the ritual behavior learned in childhood, for which reason he cannot participate in the ceremonies of the Kayová, some of whom, however, /147/ hold him in quite high esteem and appear in his yard once in a while to dance and pray in homage to him. And when he insists on the importance attributed to the social relationship established outside the family ties between compadre and the godson, he certainly is not referring, although he says so, to the Kayová, among whom, in contrast to the Ñandéva, the institution of the godparent does not seem to exist. Detached from any religious community, and lacking, therefore, the intensification of the religious experiences obtained by participation in collective ceremonies, Pascoal insists more on the magical aspect of rites and religious equipment. While the Ñandéva of the coast call the djeatsaá "my devotion," he calls it "protection," just as, among them, old Pedro Pires does when he refers to the little cedar cross that hangs on his chest. The ceremonies of the "sabedor" on the occasion of a "baptism tend to be explained as magical practices, as is done in the rural Catholicism of the region. Pascoal, by the way, has skillfully combined the latter with the doctrine of his ancestors: the yvyraídjá, protector spirit, is identified with the Guardian Angel; the soul of the newborn baby becomes the "little angel"; and if the soul of the deceased person is "lost," if it does not find the road that leads to the Beyond, it is because the priest failed to pray for its salvation.

In conclusion: If it is true that religion constitutes the nucleus of resistance of the Guaraní culture confronted with disintegrative forces, this does not signify absolutely that acculturation is not observed in this domain. The latter, however, proceeds in a slower way and in various, perhaps three, relatively distinct phases. In the first one, religious elements of foreign origin are accepted, being integrated in the cultural configuration, not with a

3: Watson E-4,5 (1943) 1952 SM4 Guarani SM4

proximity to kin or proximity to *kokué* is evident in any case. The "summer house" helps to solve the difficulty to the extent that traditional location near relatives can be largely continued, even while related elements of the dwelling pattern have changed.

A Change in the Kinship System Respecting Avuncular Marriage

It has already been mentioned that the marriage preference between maternal uncle and niece (mother's brother-sister's daughter) probably at one time existed in Cayuá culture. (Cf. *supra*, pp. 34–37.) Several arguments for this point were advanced. The surviving terminological provisions of the present Cayuá kinship system favor it; the avuncular arrangement would have coincided well with the aboriginal extended family organization; and there are so many basic and striking similarities of culture in general between the Cayuá and the coastal Tupi for whom the usage is reported. The modern absence of the avuncular form, therefore, may be presumed a result of acculturational change. (Such a union is now held to be repugnant.) We shall consider subsequently the significance of this change and the reasons to which it may be ascribed. (See pp. 118–122.)

A Change of Economic Attitudes

Cayuá economic attitudes have changed with respect to the evaluation of goods and services and, in the second place, the relation of the individual to his fellows. We shall consider the latter change first. "Individualism" may be defined as "behavior in which the individual strives toward his goal without reference to others."[156] Economic sentiments of the Cayuá formerly were more concerned with joint or familial interests and goals. A change in the direction of individualism is seen especially in the relative degree to which individual, as opposed to collective, work is performed today. Formerly, a certain group of individuals, related to each other as members of an extended family, worked cooperatively to produce many of the necessities of life common to them all. They cooperated to build their *tapái*, to cultivate their (probably joint) *kokué*, possibly to hunt, and probably to do certain kinds of fishing. Besides the common sustenance that they derived from this cooperative activity, and which was its primary purpose, they enjoyed the pleasure and solidarity such interaction brought. Cooperation gave assurance that if there was anything to eat, none would go hungry, even if his own luck happened temporarily to be short. In these activities, the extended family members worked for a common goal; this may be defined as the basis of cooperative behavior.[157]

Another type of aboriginal collective activity is the *puíxiro*. This work may have involved the members of more than a single extended family, and such inter-familial joint work parties probably helped bind together in interaction

[156] Mead, 1937, p. 16. [157] *Ibid.*